

SESSION OF 2002

SUPPLEMENTAL NOTE ON HOUSE BILL NO. 2951

As Amended by House Committee of the Whole

Brief*

HB 2951 pertains to the closing of school buildings and provides for grants to communities when the school building is converted to some community purpose.

Subject to available appropriations, the State Board of Education will establish a program to provide transition assistance to certain communities where a school building is being closed. If the building will be maintained by the community as a community center or an entity for community development, the community may apply to the State Board for a matching grant of up to \$50,000.

The program applies to school districts with under 200 enrollment. The bill becomes effective upon its publication in the statute book. The bill specifies the program covers a school building that was closed at the end of classes during the 2000-01 school year.

Background

HB 2951 is one of seven bills that were introduced by the House Committee on Education at the request of Representative Bill Mason. Subsequently, these seven bills were assigned to a subcommittee composed of Representatives Bill Mason (Chair), Marti Crow, Ralph Ostmeyer, Ethel Peterson, and Dan Williams. After adopting an amendment to limit the bill's application to a building to be maintained as a community center (by deleting inclusion of a "business"), the House Committee on Education adopted the subcommittee's recommendation to pass the bill. The bill is designed to provide some

*Supplemental notes are prepared by the Legislative Research Department and do not express legislative intent. The supplemental note and fiscal note for this bill may be accessed on the Internet at <http://www.kslegislature.org/cgi-bin/fulltext/bills.cgi>

incentive to communities in which a school building is closed to maintain that building for a community purpose.

The Kansas National Education Association presented testimony to the House Committee on Education in support of the bill. There were no other conferees.

The fiscal note states that the new grant program would be subject to appropriation, but the State Department of Education estimated that the maximum cost of the bill would be \$300,000 in the first year.

The main House Committee of the Whole amendment restricted application of the proposed program to school districts with under 200 enrollment. This change, no doubt, would materially reduce the bill's potential fiscal impact. House Committee of the Whole amendments also expanded the potential use of a closed school building to include an "entity for community development" and applied the program's application to school buildings closed at the end of the 2000-01 school term.